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HISTORICAL WORK IN MASSACHUSETTS.

BY

ANDREW McFARLAND DAVIS.

[REPRINTED FROM THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE COLONIAL SOCIETY OF
MASSACHUSETTS, VOL. I.]

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JOHN WILSON AND SON.

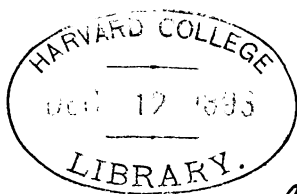
University Press.

1893.

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US12560.8



The Author.

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HISTORICAL WORK IN MASSACHUSETTS:

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE

COLONIAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS,

15 FEBRUARY, 1893.

THE Society which assembles here to-day to hold its inaugural meeting was incorporated 29 December, 1892, under the name of THE MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY. Shortly thereafter, information was conveyed to the incorporators that certain members of the Massachusetts Historical Society were of opinion that confusion might arise from the similarity of the names and the purposes of the two organizations. Steps were therefore promptly taken to change the name of this Society to THE COLONIAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS. The purposes set forth in the Certificate of Incorporation are "collecting and preserving mementoes of our Colonial Ancestors; propagating knowledge of their lives and deeds by the publication of ancient documents and records; cultivating an interest in the history of our Country, and more especially of the Colonies of Plymouth and the Massachusetts Bay; encouraging individual research into the part taken by our forefathers in the building of our Nation; promoting intelligent discussion of events in which the people of our Commonwealth have been concerned, in order that justice may be done to participants and false claims silenced; and inspiring among our members a spirit of fellowship based upon a proper appreciation of our common ancestry."

Our seal illustrates the idea upon which claims for membership

in the Society must be based. The dates represent, respectively, the foundation of Plymouth Colony; the establishment of a full form of government in the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay under a Governor having the charter in his possession; the union of the Colonies under the provincial government, and the establishment, two hundred years after the last event, of a Society composed of members who, according to the terms of its By-Laws, must prove their lineal descent from ancestors who were residents of one or both of these Colonies.

The field of work which may be expected to prove attractive to members of the Society is suggested in the Certificate of Incorporation. A glance at its phraseology reveals at once the salient points, — colonial ancestry in colonial history, the deeds of our forefathers and the fellowship of their descendants. The question has been asked, Is there room for such a society, and is there work for it to do? The answer can best be made after an examination of what has been accomplished by societies engaged in work of this nature in Massachusetts, a glance at what is now being done, and a review of the methods now in use to promote and foster such work throughout the Commonwealth. As a preliminary to any such examination, it will be well to understand precisely what we propose to do. At first thought it might seem easy to define this purpose. The objects of this Society have already been pronounced to be similar to those of the Massachusetts Historical Society. If we are an historical society, then our researches may be confined to historical and antiquarian societies. But how shall we define such societies? We cannot limit our investigation to those which specifically include the words "historical" or "antiquarian" in their corporate title. Neither of these words appears in our own title. We cannot accept the language of charters as the test. If we should do so, we should exclude the Massachusetts Historical Society, which was incorporated simply to collect and preserve historical material, and we should lose the benefit of the example of the American Antiquarian Society, the alleged purpose of which was to collect antiquities and curiosities. Measured by the language of their charters, these Societies are mere collectors. It is evident, therefore, that we must settle upon some definition of the work which has been or is being performed, and by that test determine whether we shall include any given society in our list, irrespective of its name or the language of its charter.

It is obvious that the labor of applying such a test is greatly enlarged from what would be the case if we could rely simply upon the name of the Society. Moreover, the probability of arriving at accurate results is somewhat diminished. Nevertheless, I conceive that what we want to know practically is, What have those societies in Massachusetts accomplished which collect and publish historical material? We shall be compelled, in any event, to look up the work of all organizations which by title are either historical or antiquarian; but the demand that the work of all other societies shall include publishing as well as collecting will relieve us from the necessity of considering a large number of corporations like our athenæums and public libraries, which are engaged in collecting historical material, but which do not publish, and do not intend to publish, what they collect. Let me quote from the Certificate of Incorporation of the Barre Library Association a part of the purposes therein set forth, to show how nearly the functions of this Association correspond with our own. Certain of these purposes are, "providing and supporting courses of lectures on scientific, historical, literary, and other subjects; forming and maintaining a museum containing specimens in natural history, works of art, antiquities, and other objects of interest; and for the purpose of collecting the annals of said town and the genealogies of the inhabitants." If you will examine the first Report of the Free Library Commission of Massachusetts, prepared by Mr. C. B. Tillinghast, and published in 1891,¹ you will find that a large number of the librarians distinctly assert that they have made a point of making their libraries places for the deposit of material for local history. In Lancaster, under the influence of the Hon. Henry S. Nourse, "an earnest and persistent effort has been made to obtain every book, pamphlet, or manuscript known to contain noteworthy mention of Lancaster's settlement, growth, institutions, or people." It may be added that this particular effort has been crowned with conspicuous success, and, further, that the distribution of this Report among the librarians cannot fail to render them practically unanimous in the disposition to make similar efforts in their respective localities. Notwithstanding the fact that by the terms of my definition of an historical society I am precluded from considering the work of these libraries, I

¹ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Public Document No. 44.

consider that work of such importance that I cannot pass it by in silence. With the recommendation that you examine the Report to which I have referred, I pass to the consideration of the work of those societies which by title, by promise, and by performance may claim to be historical societies.

THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The oldest organization in this country for historical work is the Massachusetts Historical Society. In August, 1790, Rev. Jeremy Belknap, D.D., drafted a plan of an antiquarian society, in which the proposed purposes were set forth as follows:—

Each member, on his admission, shall engage to use his utmost endeavors to collect and communicate to the Society manuscripts, printed books, and pamphlets, historical facts, biographical anecdotes, observations in natural history, specimens of natural and artificial curiosities, and any other matters which may elucidate the natural and political history of America from the earliest times to the present day.

The original of this paper is in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and there can be no doubt that in this document we have a record of the first step taken toward the formation of that Society. The first regular meeting of the Historical Society of which the records are given in the Proceedings was held 24 January, 1791. This meeting was attended by eight gentlemen, of whom Dr. Belknap was one. But there is in a letter-book a record by Dr. Belknap of the names of five gentlemen, first associated in 1790, followed by the names of five other gentlemen, who were said to have been elected by the first five, each nominating one. This list was headed, "A Catalogue of the Members of the Historical Society, in the order in which they were elected;" and the names of the members subsequently elected were entered under this heading for some time thereafter.

At the first regular meeting a Constitution was adopted. The following extract from that paper will indicate the intention of the associates:—

The preservation of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, and records containing historical facts, biographical anecdotes, temporary projects, and beneficial speculations conduces to mark the genius, delineate the man-

ners, and trace the progress of society in the United States, and must always have a useful tendency to rescue the true history of this country from the ravages of time and the effects of ignorance and neglect.

A collection of observations and descriptions in natural history and topography, together with specimens of natural and artificial curiosities and a selection of every thing which can improve and promote the historical knowledge of our country, either in a physical or political view, has long been considered as a desideratum; and as such a plan can be best executed by a society whose sole and special care shall be confined to the above objects, we, the subscribers, do agree to form such an institution, and to associate for the above purposes.

Four Stated Meetings each year were provided for in the Constitution, and provision was made for holding Special Meetings. All communications which should be thought worthy of preservation were to be entered at large or minuted in the books of the Society; and the originals were to be kept on file. All accounts were to be kept in dollars and cents.

The Society, 1 November, 1791, sent out a circular letter soliciting subscriptions to a weekly paper, to be called "The American Apollo," — asking for detailed information concerning the settlement, history, and statistics of the towns in the Commonwealth, and announcing that contributions to the library or museum of the Society would be accepted with thanks. Enclosed with this circular letter was a prospectus of "The American Apollo," addressed "to all the Friends of Science, Arts, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce." It stated that the paper would contain "the publications of the Historical Society, Political and Commercial Intelligence, and other entertaining matter." If a sufficient number of subscribers to defray the expense of publication should be returned by the twentieth of December, 1791, the publication was to begin on the first Friday of January, 1792. The subsequent history of this venture shows that the subscription list was not well enough patronized to provide for the permanent maintenance of the serial; but the promoters of the enterprise found sufficient encouragement in the situation to comply with their conditional promise, and on the sixth of January, 1792, they issued the first number of the "Apollo." Its titlepage showed that, in addition to the publications of the Historical Society, it contained "Essays, Moral, Political, and Poetical, and the daily occurrences in the

Natural, Civil, and Commercial World." Thirty-nine numbers were issued in this form, when the "Apollo" cut adrift from the Historical Society, and attempted an independent existence as a newspaper. Thereafter the publications of the Society were separately issued. The records show the deep interest which the members took in the matter, the various expedients which they proposed, and the devices to which they resorted to stimulate public interest in what they felt was a matter of public importance. Notwithstanding the prominence of the men who had the work in hand, the publication of the Collections for the years 1796 and 1797 was suspended for want of funds. Indeed, from that date down to the time when the Society was endowed with a publication fund, lack of means or other causes interfered from time to time with the regular issue of this series of volumes.

The Historical Society continued its work under the Constitution adopted at its first meeting, in 1791, until February, 1794, when it was incorporated under the name of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The purposes of the Society were briefly set forth in the Articles of Incorporation to be "the collection and preservation of materials for a political and natural history of the United States;" and such they nominally are to-day. The prominence given by the founders of the Society to the accumulation of a museum of curiosities brought from the public a miscellaneous assortment of gifts, some of which were evidently of doubtful value. Perhaps it was this which led to the passage of a vote in January, 1794, that "Dr. Belknap, Dr. Cutler, and Dr. Dexter be a committee to make additions to the circular letter, in which they will solicit donations for the cabinet, give directions for the necessary preservation of the several objects of natural history, and request further information on that subject." The fourth volume of the Collections was issued in 1795, and was prefaced with a circular letter "respectfully addressed to every gentleman of Science in the Continent and Islands of America." This letter was subdivided into sections, as follows:—

1. Articles on which the Society request information.
2. A list of the topics to be included in the collection of materials for the civil and ecclesiastical history of the country.
3. Directions for preserving animals and parts of animals.
4. Dr. Cutler's method of preserving the skins of birds.

5. Mr. Peck's methods of preserving animals and their skins.
6. A method of preserving birds and other animals, from the Philosophical Transactions recommended by Dr. Lettsom in his "Traveller's Companion."
7. Method of collecting and preserving vegetables, by Dr. Lettsom.
8. Mr. Peck's method of taking impressions of vegetable leaves by means of smoke.
9. Method of preserving marine productions.
10. In collecting mineral and fossil substances, the following particulars are to be attended to.

When, in 1833, the Society removed to its present location a portion of the collections thus obtained were deposited in the cabinet of the Boston Society of Natural History. Subsequently the Peabody Institute of Archæology and Ethnology received nearly all the remaining articles adapted to the purpose of its museum.¹

While the Society was still in its infancy, James Sullivan, its first President, pointed out a field of labor for its members, in which he himself was a pioneer, and where he evidently hoped that he should have followers among his associates. In the Dedication of his *History of Land Titles in Massachusetts*² he thus addresses his fellow-members: —

To the Members of the Historical Society.

BRETHREN, — Our Society was formed by the government, under an expectation that our exertions would collect and preserve the means for furnishing a complete history of our country. The history of our politics and wars is very interesting and important; the natural history of our country will not be neglected; but the history of the laws and jurisprudence of a nation boasting the blessings of a free and equal government cannot be of less consequence to the community, and even to the world. . . .

It is obvious that Dr. Sullivan thought that labor in historical jurisprudence, however important it might be, was not likely to prove attractive to his brother-members, nor can it be denied that his judgment has proved to be, in the main, well founded. Yet

¹ See Report of Committee, printed in the Society's Proceedings, vol. i. The historical sketch of the early days of the Society will repay careful examination.

² *The History of Land Titles in Massachusetts*. By James Sullivan, LL.D. Boston. 1801.

we cannot fail to recognize the beneficial effects produced by this and other similar societies when their efforts have been put forth in behalf of the publication by the Commonwealth of the Province Laws. We owe the Society a debt of thanks for the share it has taken in standing by the Editor of those volumes in the chronic warfare which has been waged against their publication.

A glance at the list of members of this Society from the date of its foundation to the present time will show that the majority of them have been men who have distinguished themselves in their separate walks of life, and have thus brought honor upon the Society to which they belonged. So manifest is this fact that one might hesitate to say whether the distinction of the Society might not better rest upon the reputation of its members than upon the work which it has done, were it not that he would be confronted by the prodigious extent and value of that work. Merely to enumerate the names of the distinguished men who have contributed to build up the fame of the Society would be a formidable undertaking; and every attempt at an analysis of the work represented by the twenty-seven volumes of Proceedings and fifty-five volumes of Collections, would far transcend the limits of the space at my command. In the sixth volume of the Second Series of the Proceedings, the Librarian has given a partial bibliography of the Society, which will indicate the task which lies before him who undertakes to tell what may be found in these volumes. The Proceedings contain papers submitted by members at the regular meetings, and discussions of topics raised by their consideration. These papers cover a broad range of subjects, and many of them contain researches of great importance to historical writers. Indeed, it may safely be asserted that no student engaged in the investigation of a topic connected directly or indirectly with the history of Massachusetts can afford to neglect these volumes. The subject would be rare and recondite which would not find light already thrown upon it by some of the papers published therein.

The key-note to the character of the original material which is to be found in the earlier volumes of the Collections is set by the "Articles on which the Society request information," contained in the circulars which they sent out. It was obvious that the Society wished to concentrate information concerning the early

settlements of the towns of the Commonwealth, their growth and prosperity, and the history of their churches, schools, and industries, in such form as to be accessible to the historian. Some of the information sought for was lodged in the memories of old men, and would be lost unless placed on record; nearly all would be of little value if it remained in this scattered form.

The appeal of the Society stirred up an interest in the minds of local antiquaries, and brought forth many communications covering the points concerning which information was asked. The public also responded to the request for the deposit of manuscripts, etc.; and the pages of the early volumes of the Collections bear testimony to the success of the circular. The value of the individual communications depends upon two variable factors, — the fitness of the writer for the work, and the materials which he had at command. A glance at these volumes will show that the character of contributions and the methods of editing have improved very much in later years. Only those who have intimate knowledge of the subjects of the papers can testify as to their respective value; but no person would attempt the history of any of the older Massachusetts towns without consulting the Collections. With regard to the manuscripts relating to general topics, which were selected for publication, we stand on safer ground. Their value is universally recognized, and contributes largely to the reputation of the Society. If no other publications had been issued by the Society than Gookin's Historical Collections of the Indians, Hubbard's History of New England, The Body of Liberties, and Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, the members might still be satisfied with the record. The pride taken by those who aided in giving Bradford's History to the world is understood by all historical students. No doubt their predecessors felt a similar glow of pleasure when Hubbard's work was published, and the reading public of that day were equally appreciative and grateful.¹

¹ Nearly every time that Savage refers to Hubbard in the notes to his edition of Winthrop's History of New England, he does so with a sneer; but Charles Deane, in his chapter on "New England" (Narrative and Critical History of America, vol. iii. p. 362), very justly says, "This was by far the most important history which had then been written." The publication of the works of Winthrop and Bradford materially lessened its value.

In addition to the publication of manuscripts, another way in which the Society could be useful quickly suggested itself. There were no public libraries at that time. Books relating to the early history of this continent were rare and relatively expensive. There was an evident opportunity to bring within reach of the reading public some of these rare works, by reprinting them in the Collections, and of this opportunity they at once availed themselves. It was not, however, until after they had published quite a number of these reprints that in a prefatory notice in the fifth volume (Second Series) a statement was made of the purpose of the Society in this direction, in the following words: "The Historical Society consider it to be one important object of their Institution to multiply copies of rare and valuable works relative to the country." This prefatory note introduced Hubbard's History, which was first offered to the public in volumes five and six of the Second Series of the Collections; and the note concludes with a statement to the effect that the History had never been published. It may be that, in speaking of multiplying copies of rare and valuable works, they referred solely to the publication of manuscripts; but it seems more likely that the reference was intended to include the work of reprinting rare volumes, in which they had already made great progress.

When they first embarked upon this enterprise, the mistake was made of attempting to select for publication portions only of the works which were to be reprinted. It was soon discovered, however, that what one person would choose to omit might be the very portion which another person would wish to print. It will be found, therefore, as a result of these different opinions, that parts of some of these reprints are given in separate volumes. The selection first given in the Collections not adequately meeting the wants of readers, the omitted portions were inserted in subsequent issues. Very little effort was made in the way of editing these early reprints, yet when we think of the place that they filled in the libraries of the early part of this century, we can realize how they must have been welcomed by the students of the day. A glance at the titles of some of them will show how great is the value of the Collections in this direction alone. We find here, — New England's First Fruits; Roger Williams's Key into the Language of America; Mourt's Relation; Good News from

New England; Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence; John Dunton's Journal; New England's Jonah Cast Up; Eliot's Indian Grammar begun; New England's Salamander; Capt. John Smith's Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters; Plain Dealing in Newes from New England; Josselyn's Two Voyages; Sir Ferdinando Gorges Briefe Narrative; Capt. John Smith's Description of New England; Gosnold's Letter and Archer's and Brereton's Account of Gosnold's Voyage; Rosier's True Relation of Waymouth's Voyage; Levett's Voyage to New England in 1623; Strachey's History of Travaile into Virginia; Ill Newes from New England.

It will be understood, of course, that I am not undertaking to give a bibliography of the Society. I have selected these titles to illustrate the value of the work done in two directions, — the publication from manuscript of historical works and the reprinting of rare books. The enumeration of these titles speaks volumes of praise for the work of the Society.

The later numbers of the Collections have been devoted to the publication of papers which have been placed in the custody of the Society. They include selections from the Hinckley, the Winthrop, the Mather, the Aspinwall, the Belknap, the Heath, the Warren, the Trumbull, and the Sewall papers and Sewall's Letter-Book. These publications are creditable in appearance, and have been admirably edited. The papers which have just been mentioned fill the last twenty volumes of the Collections; yet they constitute but a part of the treasures of this kind, in the possession of the Society, awaiting their turn for examination, selection, and publication. The archives of the Society have from the beginning been favorably regarded by those who had material of this sort which they wished to place in safe-keeping. For many years they furnished the only place in New England where such a deposit could properly be made; and since by their publications they have added to their reputation, it has remained a favorite place for such deposits, notwithstanding the existence of other societies engaged in similar work.

It is difficult to tell what one might not hope to find in searching these volumes of manuscript. A chance word here, a phrase used there, may unlock some mystery or tell some story to the watchful eye, which to the casual observer might have no special signifi-

cance. An illustration will perhaps better convey my meaning. The tradition of the Palatine Light, which is reported to have been seen off Block Island at irregular intervals for more than a century, has served Whittier and Higginson as a subject for verse, and has been used by Dr. Hale as the incentive for a story. The local antiquaries have never been able to settle with precision whether the name of the Light came from a ship that was wrecked on Block Island, or from the castaways themselves. Although tradition points steadily towards a shipwreck as the basis of the name, and the tendency is in favor of the derivation from the passengers rather than the ship, yet the date of the shipwreck is in obscurity. Now, it happened that in looking over the Colman papers, I found a reference to a contribution collected by Colman in behalf of some shipwrecked Palatines on Block Island. Unfortunately the draft of the letter was not dated, although it seemed probable that it was written between 1732 and 1740. If the letter had been dated, I should have felt certain that the mystery which had puzzled the Block Island historians could be removed.¹ The question at issue is not important; but there are many people interested in it, and it is but one of hundreds which the publication of these manuscripts will help to answer.

The statement is made in the "Notes on Special Collections in American Libraries," No. 45, Bibliographical Contributions, issued by the Library of Harvard University, that this collection is "probably the largest mass of *historical* MSS. possessed by any similar American society, going back to the earliest periods of American history." A calendar of them is in preparation.

At the second meeting of the Society the members handed in lists of books which they were willing to contribute towards the foundation of a library. Being thus early in the field, the Society have a good collection of Americana, which was greatly enriched by the copies in the Dowse Library. They have also many files of early newspapers. Special attention has been given of late to New England local history; and the library is rich in town and county histories. The subject of the recent war has been selected as a topic worthy of special illustration, and a collection of one thousand nine hundred volumes and four thousand eight hundred

¹ See Mr. Edes's communication to the March Meeting of this Society, pages 113-114. This corroborates my conjecture as to the date.

pamphlets treating of that subject has been secured.¹ The last published catalogue was printed in 1860. Later accessions are to be found in the manuscript catalogue. The Society have a cabinet of medals and relics and a collection of historical portraits.

The funds of the Society, through gifts and bequests, now in the possession of the Treasurer, amount to a little over one hundred and seventy-four thousand dollars. In this estimate the valuable real estate occupied in part by the Society is set down at the modest sum of one hundred and three thousand dollars. The fund in which non-members of the Society are most interested is the publication fund. The greater part of the income heretofore used by the Society to meet the expense of their publications has come from the munificent gift of George Peabody, whose name is associated with so many enterprises, designed to benefit his fellow-men. The Society stand in the Treasurer's books debtor to that fund to-day a little over twenty-two thousand dollars; and it is mainly through this liberal gift that the great work of publication in which they are now engaged, has been carried on.

The membership was limited in the Constitution to thirty. In the Charter it was enacted that the number of members should never be more than sixty, excepting Honorary Members residing without the limits of this Commonwealth. It has always been the custom of the Society to keep upon their roll of Honorary or Corresponding Members a goodly array of names of distinguished men from all parts of the world. In 1857, power was conferred upon the Society to increase its Resident Membership to one hundred, and to elect Corresponding and Honorary Members, no limit being fixed to their number. Stated meetings were originally held once a quarter. In 1833, the By-Laws were changed, since which time they have been held monthly.

THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

In 1812 another Society was organized whose purpose, so far as can be inferred from the petition for a Charter and from the language of the Charter itself, was to establish a museum and a depository for materials which would be of use to future historians. The movement for the incorporation of this Society took place in

¹ See Bibliographical Contributions, Library of Harvard University, No. 45, p. 8.

Worcester. The name selected was the "American Antiquarian Society." The subscribers to the petition stated that, "influenced by a desire to contribute to the advancement of the Arts and Sciences, and to aid, by their individual and united efforts, in collecting and preserving such materials as may be useful in marking their progress, not only in the United States, but in other parts of the globe, and wishing also to assist the researches of the future historians of our country," they would "respectfully represent to the Legislature that, in their opinion, the establishment of an Antiquarian Society within this Commonwealth would conduce essentially to the attainment of these objects."

The Charter which was granted in response to this petition set forth the purposes of the Society in the preamble as follows: "Whereas, the collection and preservation of the Antiquities of our country, and of curious and valuable productions in art and nature, have a tendency to enlarge the sphere of human knowledge, aid the progress of science, perpetuate the history of moral and political events, and to improve and interest posterity; Therefore, be it enacted," etc. It was provided in the Act of Incorporation that the library and museum of the Society should be kept in the town of Worcester. This location of the Society was natural, since the first movement towards its incorporation originated in Worcester; but the introduction into its Charter of the clause requiring the library and museum to be kept there probably arose from the views on the subject of Isaiah Thomas, who may be said to have been the founder of the Society. It was stated in the petition for a Charter that one of the subscribers was in possession of a valuable collection of books, obtained with great labor and expense, the value of which might be fairly estimated at about five thousand dollars, some of them more ancient than were to be found in any other part of our country, and all of which he proposed to transfer to the proposed Society. Isaiah Thomas is the person alluded to. His opinions, therefore, were regarded with deference. It is said that he not only feared the perils of conflagration to which such a collection would be exposed in Boston, but that he regarded the increased danger on the seaboard, from the ravages of a foreign enemy in time of war, as a sufficient reason for wishing the books and curiosities of the Society to be retained in an interior town.

In 1819, Mr. Thomas offered to build, at his own expense, a suitable edifice for the use of the Society. The offer was accepted, and the building erected in pursuance thereof was dedicated in 1820. An address to members, prepared in 1819, brings to our view an evident fear on the part of the Society that its organization under a State charter might obscure the national character of its work. In the same address we find a definition of the specific field of work to which the Society proposed to devote its energies. The language used is as follows: —

This local authority [that is, the Legislature of Massachusetts] was resorted to from doubts having been expressed whether Congress had the power to grant a charter without the District of Columbia. Its members are selected from all parts of the Union. Its respectability is inferred from its numbers, and from its comprising men of the first standing and intelligence in the nation, and some of first distinction in other countries. The objects of this institution are commensurate with the lapse of time, and its benefits will be more and more accumulating in the progression of ages. As the antiquities of our country, by various means, are rapidly decreasing, an institution whose business will be to collect and preserve such as remain and can be obtained must be viewed as highly important. The chief objects of the inquiries and researches of this Society, which cannot too soon arrest its attention, will be American Antiquities, — natural, artificial, and literary.

The membership of the Society is limited to one hundred and forty persons, and has always been distributed throughout the Union. An examination of a recent list shows that twenty-one States and the District of Columbia were, at the date of its publication, represented in the Society by active or domestic members. The list of foreign members, though small, is made up exclusively of men of great distinction from all parts of the civilized world.

Stated meetings of the Society are held semi-annually in April and October. The Annual Meeting in October, at which officers are elected, is held in Worcester in Antiquarian Hall. The April meeting is held in Boston in the Hall of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The building now occupied by the Society, known as Antiquarian Hall, was completed in 1853.

The bibliography of the Society was compiled by Nathaniel Paine, and was printed in 1876 in a pamphlet entitled "Account of

the American Antiquarian Society, with a List of its Publications. Prepared for the International Exhibition of 1876." Another list of the publications of the Society, prepared by the same author, was published by the Society in 1883. A bibliography brought down to a still later date is given in the Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the year 1890. Seven volumes, entitled "*Archæologia Americana*, Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society," were published 1820-85. Besides these, various scattered reports of meetings, addresses, and proceedings were published from time to time. Since 1849, the Proceedings have been regularly printed. They include Reports of the Council and of officers, and original papers read at the meetings.

The following selections from the publications in the "*Archæologia Americana*," will indicate the character of the contents of these volumes: Hennepin's Account of the Discovery of the River Mississippi, etc.; A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes of North America, by Albert Gallatin, LL.D.; An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians of New England, by Daniel Gookin; Records of the Company of the Massachusetts Bay, to the Embarkation of Winthrop and his Associates for New England, with an Introductory Chapter on the Origin of the Company, by Samuel F. Haven, A. M.; The Diaries of John Hull, Mint-Master and Treasurer of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, with a Memoir by Samuel Jennison, Esq.; Original Documents from the State Paper Office, London, and the British Museum, illustrating the History of Sir Walter Raleigh's First American Colony, and the Colony at Jamestown, with an Appendix containing a Memoir of Sir Ralph Lane, edited by Rev. Edward E. Hale; A Discourse of Virginia, by Edward Maria Wingfield, edited with Notes and an Introduction by Charles Deane, A. M.; New England's Rarities discovered by John Josselyn, Lieutenant, with an Introduction by Edward Tuckerman, A. M.; History of Printing in America, etc., by Isaiah Thomas, LL.D., being a second edition with the author's corrections and additions, and a Catalogue of American Publications previous to the Revolution of 1776; and Note-Book kept by Thomas Lechford, Esq., 1638-41.

The Proceedings contain a great number of papers covering

a variety of topics of historical and archæological importance. A few titles will indicate their character: Report of the Librarian, with a Historical Sketch of Efforts at Different Periods to delineate and decipher the Inscriptions on Dighton Rock; The Early Paper Currency of Massachusetts, by Nathaniel Paine; Remarks on Recent Archæological and Anthropological Discoveries, also on the History of European Discoveries and Settlement on the Shores of the New World, and Contributions to Geographical History from the British Records Commission and Mr. Major of the British Museum, etc., by Charles Deane; Pre-historic American Occupation and Civilization, by Samuel F. Haven, Esq.; The Likelihood of an Admixture of Japanese Blood on Our North West Coast, by Horace Davis, Esq.; Origin and Early Progress of Indian Missions in New England, etc., by J. Hammond Trumbull, LL.D.

A brief description of the library and cabinet, with a list of the portraits, statues, and busts contained in the Society's hall, will be found in the pamphlet of Mr. Paine, to which reference has already been made. The same author has printed another account in the History of Worcester County.¹ The subject of the library

¹ THE WORCESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Worcester County Historical Society was incorporated 19 February, 1831, "for the purpose of collecting and preserving materials for civil and natural history." A circular was issued without date, a copy of which is preserved in the American Antiquarian Society, in which the title of the Society was given as The Worcester Historical Society, and the purpose of the organization is there stated to be "collecting and preserving materials for a complete and accurate history of the County of Worcester." The same title is given in Lincoln's History of Worcester, published in 1836, and the statement is therein made that the Society requires as evidence of qualification for membership the publication of some work or some practical exertion in aid of these objects. At that date, Hon. John Davis had been President from the date of the organization of the Society.

On the fourth of October, 1831, the Society celebrated the centennial anniversary of the incorporation of Worcester County, selecting as an event suitable for such a memorial service the first sitting of the Supreme Judicial Court in Worcester County. The date which was adopted was not precisely coincident, but was selected because it was the first day of the session of that tribunal in the year 1831. An address was then delivered by the President, which, with a particular account of the ceremonies, was deposited in the American Antiquarian Society's Collections.

Mr. Nathaniel Paine of Worcester has made search for the records of this Society without avail. He writes me that Mr. C. C. Baldwin, a former librarian

has also been topically treated, in the History of Worcester County, by Samuel S. Green, a member of the Society. The library has grown, from the little collection of books given by Isaiah Thomas, to about a hundred thousand volumes, consisting in part of pamphlets, which are estimated at ten to a volume. It has over five thousand volumes of newspapers on its shelves. Some of these are quite rare, and attract students of American history from all parts of the country. The manuscript collection is especially rich in material covering the period of the Revolution. A card-catalogue of the library is nearly completed.

THE AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION.

The American Statistical Association was incorporated 5 February, 1841, for the purpose of "collecting, preserving, and diffusing statistical information." The publications of this Association are given in the Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1890. The following titles will show the historical character of some of the contributions: *Memoirs of American Discoveries, Colonization, Commerce, and Fishery, from Newfoundland to Florida, both inclusive, down to 1630*, by Joseph B. Felt, LL.D.; *The History of Paper Money in the Province of Massachusetts before the Revolution, with an Account of the Land Bank and the Silver Bank*, by E. H. Derby; *Boston's Trade and Commerce for Forty Years, 1844-84*, by Hamilton Andrews Hill, A.M. There are also two valuable statistical

of the Antiquarian Society, under date of 4 October, 1831, says in his diary that the Historical Society was greatly honored at the centennial celebration. Under date of 5 October, 1831, he says that he went to a meeting of the Society, and was chosen to make a report of all the proceedings at the celebration, which report, with a bottle of wine and other appropriate articles, he was to enclose in a tight and safe box, made for the purpose, and commit to the care of the Antiquarian Society. These were to remain in the hands of that Society unopened until the end of one hundred years, when it was intended that they should be brought forth and examined. Mr. Paine reports that the bottle, and presumably its contents, are still at the Antiquarian Hall, but the box has disappeared, together with the account of the proceedings at the celebration. To those of us who do not expect to be on hand when the cork is drawn in 1931, this is necessarily a source of regret, in which it is not improbable that those who shall be present at the ceremonial of opening the bottle will participate.

The Society is not known to have been in existence later than 1836 or 1837, and has not left any other traces of its existence than those I have mentioned.

papers, by Dr. Felt, one relating to statistics of towns in Massachusetts, and one to statistics of population in Massachusetts. There is also an Account of the Collections of the American Statistical Association, by Samuel A. Green, M.D., in the Collections, New Series, I., 328.

THE NEW-ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY.

The New-England Historic Genealogical Society was incorporated 18 March, 1845, "for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and occasionally publishing genealogical and historical matter relating to early New England families, and for the establishment and maintenance of a cabinet."

The Society has a house at 18 Somerset Street, Boston, in which are stored its cabinet and collection of manuscripts. The latter contains the well-known Knox manuscripts, the United States Census of Boston of 1790, and the Direct Tax of 1798.¹ A library, rich in town histories, English parish registers, family genealogies, and works for consultation, bearing upon the special topics which interest the members, is arranged upon shelves in a cheerful hall in the upper story of the house. This hall is decorated with the portraits belonging to the Society, some of which delineate the features of those who have held office in it, while others are curious and interesting specimens of portraiture during the Colonial and Provincial periods.

The Proceedings at the Annual Meetings of the Society have been separately published each year since 1865. The Reports of the Council and of the Committees of the Society are included in this publication. Previous to 1865, the Proceedings appeared only in the Register, though some of the annual addresses were separately printed. The New-England Historical and Genealogical Register is published quarterly by the Society. Forty-six volumes of this serial (1846-92) have been issued. The articles are contributed and are published under the authors' names. The Society has no other method of reaching the public than through this serial, which is in charge of an Editor, and the Proceedings, which contain merely the President's Annual Address

¹ The Census of 1790, and the Direct Tax of 1798, so far as it relates to Boston, have been printed in the Twenty-second Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston.

and reports to the Annual Meeting. It has not been the custom of the Society to publish the papers read at its monthly meetings; nor is there any way through which members can communicate to the Society information upon topics in which they are interested, except through the pages of the Register. There is one exception to this general statement. The Society has a Historiographer, who communicates to the monthly meetings memorial sketches of deceased members, which are subsequently printed in the Register. Four volumes of Memorial Biographies have also been published, and prior to the establishment of this custom there was one volume issued by the Society, in 1878, entitled "Memoirs of Several Deceased Members," etc. A volume entitled *Rolls of Membership of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, 1844-91*, was issued in 1892. It contains a list of the officers of the Society from its foundation, a carefully prepared list of members, and elaborate classified indexes of persons and places.

The articles in the Register vary greatly in quality, since the work of writers of such diverse grades of fitness must necessarily be widely different in value. Under its present editorial management, the serial is a credit to the Society, and the vast amount of information which the forty-six volumes contain, relative to families and local history, makes its possession indispensable to every library, public or private, which makes any pretence of furnishing materials for the study of the history of New England. The early volumes are furnished with indexes of surnames only. After a time indexes of places were added. The mass of material in the latest volumes is made easy of consultation by copious classified indexes of names, places, and subjects.¹

THE ESSEX INSTITUTE.

The Essex Institute was formed by the union, in 1848, of the Essex Historical Society and the Essex County Natural History

¹ The Gregg Genealogy Company was incorporated 18 May, 1893, "to carry on a search for historical and genealogical facts connected with persons in America by names of Gregg, Gragg, Greig, and lines collateral thereto, and to print and publish the results of such search." Its headquarters are in Boston.

The Woodbury Genealogical Society was incorporated 23 June, 1893. Its headquarters are in Salem. Its purposes are "to collect and publish historical and genealogical information concerning the old planters, John and William Woodbury, their ancestors and descendants, and to perpetuate their memory by monuments or otherwise."

Society.¹ The Essex Historical Society was incorporated in 1821. The purpose of the Society as stated in the Act of Incorporation was to collect and preserve materials for the civil and natural history of the County of Essex.

In April, 1859, the first number of the first volume of the Historical Collections of the Essex Institute was issued. It is there stated that "the principal object that the founders of the Essex Historical Society had in view at the organization of said Society (which in 1848 was incorporated with the Essex County Natural History Society under the name of the Essex Institute) was the collection and preservation of all authentic memorials relating to the civil history of the County of Essex in the State of Massachusetts, and of the eminent men who have resided within its limits, from the first settlement, and thus to provide ample material for a correct history of this part of the Commonwealth." The Act of Incorporation of the Essex Institute was approved 11 February, 1848, and so far as the historical functions of the Corporation are concerned, it merely continues in force those of the Historical Society. Twenty-eight volumes of the Historical Collections were issued by the Institute in the years 1859 to 1893. Of the Bulletin of the Essex Institute, twenty-four volumes have been issued (1869-93). In the first number it is stated that "the Bulletin of the Essex Institute is intended to give the public such portions of communications made to the Essex Institute at its semi-monthly and other public meetings as are of popular interest. . . . Such papers as are somewhat dryly historical or rigidly scientific will be reserved for publication in another form." The Bulletin is mainly made up of scientific articles, but contains some historical or archæological papers. The Institute has also issued six volumes of another series of papers entitled Proceedings of the Essex Institute. In the first number of the Proceedings, after describing the formation of the Institute by the union of the Historical and Natural History Societies, the statement is made that there are three departments, — History, Natural History, and Horticulture, — and the object of each department is defined. That of the

¹ A full history of the Institute will be found in the "Visitor's Guide to Salem," Salem, 1892, pp. 59-71; and Essex Institute Historical Collections (1868-69) ix. (part 2) 3-40; and (1871-72) xi. 1-18.

Historical Department is said to be "the collection and preservation of whatever relates to the topography, antiquities, civil and ecclesiastical history, of Essex County, in Massachusetts." The collection of portraits, relics, and household articles illustrative of the home life of the early settlers, owned by the Institute, is very complete.¹

THE BACKUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Backus Historical Society was organized 10 March, 1853. The object of this Society is to collect and to preserve, for publication or otherwise, materials illustrative of the history of Baptist churches and of the principles by which they are distinguished in all ages and countries, but more especially those which relate to the origin and progress of the Baptist churches of New England. The Society holds annually a literary meeting at Tremont Temple, Boston, and occasionally a semi-annual meeting. The books and papers of the Society are in the library of the Newton Theological Institution. In 1871 the Society reprinted Backus's History of New England, with particular reference to the Baptist Church; and occasionally it publishes papers.²

¹ The collection of memorials is thus alluded to by Dr. George E. Ellis in announcing to the Massachusetts Historical Society the death of Dr. Henry Wheatland: —

"He identified the principal work and interests of his long life mainly with institutions in Salem devoted to the preservation and illustration of the historical relics of that, the first of the permanent settlements in the Bay Colony. Those relics in objects and documents are rich and copious, covering, indeed, in a well-nigh complete and exhaustive collection long under his charge as the head of the Essex Institute, the antiquities and memorials accumulating for nearly three centuries.

"They begin with the reconstructed rafters and timbers of the first meeting-house of the settlement, in which Higginson, Hugh Peters, and Roger Williams preached, and Governor Winthrop exhorted and 'prophesied.' In no other ancient town in our country, not even in the Pilgrim Hall, at Plymouth, is there gathered so full and continuous a collection of articles identified with the life of the succeeding generations of the people. The household, domestic, culinary, mechanical, and agricultural implements of the elders are all represented.

"Their apparels and furniture, as well as their effigies, journals, letters, and books, present themselves in order."

² The Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Church has a collection of materials relating principally to that church in Massachusetts. It was formerly kept at the Theological School in Cambridge, but is now at the Diocesan House, Joy Street, Boston. Rev. Edmund F. Slafter is Registrar, has charge of the collection, and makes an annual report to the Convention.

THE OLD COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Old Colony Historical Society, Taunton, was incorporated 4 May, 1853, for the purpose "of preserving and perpetuating the history of the Old Colony in Massachusetts, and of collecting and holding documents, books, and memoirs relating to history." The Society has published four numbers of Collections in the years 1879, 1880, 1885, and 1889. It holds quarterly meetings, at which papers are read. Reports of the proceedings at these meetings are issued. It has a membership of five hundred persons, a building of its own, called Historical Hall, a library of two thousand volumes, and a collection of portraits and relics. The Society has a historiographer, who prepares memorial sketches of deceased members. These are incorporated in the selections.

THE DORCHESTER ANTIQUARIAN AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society was incorporated 3 May, 1855, "for the purpose of collecting such manuscripts, books, and natural and artificial curiosities, as may tend to illustrate and preserve the history of the United States, and of publishing such portions of these collections as may be deemed interesting and instructive to succeeding generations." The publications of the Society have been: 1844, *Memoirs of Roger Clap, 1620*, second edition; 1846, *Annals of the Town of Dorchester, 1630-1753*, James Blake; 1859, *Journal, Life and Death of Richard Mather*; 1859, *History of the Town of Dorchester*, by a committee of the Society. The membership of this Corporation has not been kept up; and it is possible that it may be permitted to expire through the death of its two surviving members. Its collections are in the keeping of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society. Among these is the silver seal of the Superior Court of Judicature.

THE DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Dedham Historical Society was incorporated 23 April, 1862, "for the purpose of collecting and preserving such books, newspapers, records, pamphlets, and transactions as may tend to illustrate and perpetuate the history of New England, and

especially of the town of Dedham." In 1886, it was authorized by special statute to erect a building. A lot of land and ten thousand dollars for a building were left to the Society by Miss Hannah Shuttleworth. A fire-proof building, simple in style but pleasing in appearance, was erected in 1886-87. The publications of the Society have been: 1883, *A Plan of Dedham Village, 1636-1876*, with descriptions of the grants of the lots to original owners, transcribed from the town records; 1887, *Dedham, England*, by Rev. William F. Cheney; 1888, *Epitaphs in the old Burial-Place, Dedham, Mass.*, Carlos Slafter; 1889-90, *Annual Reports*; 1890-92, *Dedham Historical Register*, Vols. I., II., III. The Register is a quarterly magazine. A charming vignette of the library building illustrates the cover of the serial. Among the objects of the publication are the following: "To preserve in a permanent form all manuscript papers of an historical character, and to encourage a taste for local history." It contains accounts of the current proceedings of the Historical Society, its work, and information as to its library. Mr. Julius H. Tuttle says: "We have a flourishing society, our meetings are well attended, and the popular interest in the welfare of the Institution is remarkable." The library contains three thousand volumes. The Records of Town, Church, and Parish are deposited in the fire-proof vaults of the Society for safe-keeping. The celebrations on the two hundred and fiftieth anniversaries of the settlement of the town and of the founding of the church are to be attributed largely to the prompting of the officers of this Society.¹

THE OLD RESIDENTS' HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF LOWELL.

The Old Residents' Historical Association of Lowell was organized 19 December, 1868. The objects of the Association as set forth in the Constitution are to collect, arrange, preserve, and perhaps from time to time publish any facts relating to the City of Lowell, as also to gather and keep all printed or written documents, as well as traditional evidence of every description,

¹ In the winter of 1863-64, Mr. John B. Willard delivered two lectures on historical subjects at Harvard. Through his exertions an historical society was organized. It has not, however, accomplished any work, and the fact that it ever existed is known to but few of the citizens of the town of Harvard.

relating to the city. It holds quarterly meetings at which papers on local history or biography are presented. These contributions are annually printed in pamphlet form, the contributions of each four years making one volume. Four such volumes contain all the papers read before the Association to October, 1892. The Association has a library.¹

THE POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION.

The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, was incorporated 9 May, 1870, for "the purpose of collecting and preserving such memorials, books, records, papers, and curiosities as may tend to illustrate and perpetuate the history of the aborigines and of the early settlers of that region." The publications of the Society are: History of what befell Stephen Williams in Captivity, with appendix and notes by the Editor, 1889; Proceedings, 1870-79, Vol. I., 1890; Vol. II. is now in the hands of an editor. The Society has an extensive museum, illustrative of the style of life in New England in early times, and a library of ten thousand volumes.

THE CANTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Canton Historical Society was founded in 1871. Its Constitution states that it has for its object "the collecting and preservation of everything relating to the History, Topography, and Family Genealogy of our town." It has issued no publications. It holds an Annual Meeting at which provision is made for a Fast-Day walk. This walk usually covers six or eight miles within the town, and affords an opportunity to point out objects and sites of local historical interest. Preliminary steps have been taken to incorporate the Society.²

¹ The title, "The Old Residents' Historical Society, Lowell," is improperly included in the list of Historical Societies of the United States issued by the American Historical Association.

² This Society was incorporated 29 May, 1893. Its purposes, as described in the Certificate of Incorporation, are "to collect and preserve everything relating to the history, topography, and family genealogy of the town of Canton, Mass."

**THE HISTORICAL, NATURAL HISTORY, AND LIBRARY SOCIETY
OF SOUTH NATICK.**

The Historical, Natural History, and Library Society of South Natick was incorporated 26 April, 1874. It occupies a hall in the basement of the Bacon Free Library building, and has a fine collection. Its library, numbering one thousand volumes, is included in the Bacon Collection. The purposes were defined in the Certificate of Incorporation to be "to establish and maintain a public library and reading-room and courses of lectures, and to collect and preserve specimens in natural history, works of art, and historical relics and antiquities in connection therewith." In 1884, the Society issued "A Review of the First Fourteen Years of the Society, with the Field-day Proceedings of 1881-83." Twenty-seven papers on local topics are printed therein.¹

THE WORCESTER SOCIETY OF ANTIQUITY.

The Worcester Society of Antiquity was organized 23 January, 1875, and incorporated 22 March, 1877. Its object as stated in its Constitution was "to foster in its members a love and admiration for antiquarian research and archæological science, and to rescue from oblivion such historical matter as would otherwise be lost." In the Certificate of Incorporation the purposes of the Society are stated in substantially the same language, and to the foregoing are added the collection and preservation of antiquarian relics of every description. The Society has always been remarkably active and successful, and to-day occupies a building of its own, in which is a fine hall called Salisbury Hall, after the President of the American Antiquarian Society, who gave the land on which the building stands, and contributed liberally towards the construction of the edifice. On the occasion of the opening of this hall, Mr. Salisbury said: "This Society started without endowment, nucleus, or properties which would serve as

¹ The National Historical and Library Society, South Natick, is the title of a Society given in the *Magazine of American History*, July, 1890, page 424. The Historical Society, South Natick, is the title of a Society, and the Natural History and Library Society, South Natick, is the title of another Society, included in the list of Historical Societies issued by the American Historical Association. I have not been able to learn anything about these organizations.

an inducement for wider exertion. Its possessions are almost entirely the result of the unaided devotion of its members to the purposes and objects of their organization. How stable and satisfactory has been each step of progress under such conditions is demonstrated by the rapid growth and development of the Association."

An excellent résumé of the publications of the Society is given in the Worcester "Commercial and Board of Trade Bulletin" for January, 1893. The "Inscriptions from the Old Burial Grounds of Worcester" was issued in 1878. An addendum was published in 1879, with notes and the death record to 1825. The first two volumes of the Early Records of Worcester were put in print in 1879-80. The Proprietors' Book, with nearly three hundred maps and plans, was issued in 1880-81. This was followed by the publication of the Town Records, 1753-83. The first volume of the Records of the County Court of General Sessions, 1731-37, was published in 1883. After an interval of six years, the printing of the Town Records was resumed under an arrangement by which the city pays half of the expense. Two volumes of this second series have been completed, and the third and fourth are now in press. The Proceedings have been issued yearly since 1877. They contain papers on historical, genealogical, and other subjects. The general name of Collections is given to the whole series, of which ten volumes are now complete.

The library of the Society contains about fifteen thousand volumes. The museum contains many articles of interest. In a "Preface to Collections," the following language is used: "It may safely be said that no other society in Massachusetts has been able to accomplish so much in so short a time." The statement was unquestionably true when made, and there can be little doubt that it remains true to-day. The preservation of the Town, Proprietors', and Court Records is a work for which those interested in local history must ever be grateful to the Society. Monthly meetings are held, at which papers on historical topics are submitted.

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

The Military Historical Society of Massachusetts was formed in January, 1876. It was incorporated 24 February, 1891, "for the

purpose of the prosecution of studies connected with the military history of our own and other countries, the establishment of a reading-room and library devoted to such topics, and the maintenance of social meetings for the discussion of the same." In 1881, the Society issued Volume I., "The Peninsular Campaign of General McClellan in 1862,"—Papers read before the Society. In the preface to this volume it is stated that the chief object of this Society is the investigation of questions relating to the War of the Rebellion. Papers (or reports) are prepared by committees appointed to investigate given questions, and are read before the Society, after which they may become the subject of discussion and of criticism. A list of papers, which have been read before the Society, is given, and the places where some of them have been published are indicated. The Society hopes to publish soon a series of papers on the Campaign of General Pope in Virginia in 1862.¹

¹ The Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati was incorporated in 1806. The publications of the Society have been: 1872,—List of Members of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, etc., with brief biographies, etc., by Francis S. Drake; 1873,—Memorials of the Society of Cincinnati of Massachusetts, by Francis S. Drake; 1883,—The Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati: An Historical Address delivered on the occasion of the Centennial Celebration, by Samuel C. Cobb; 1890,—Memorials of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, 1890. This Society is in its nature a relief society, but its biographical publications are historical in character.

The Commandery of the State of Massachusetts Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States was incorporated 15 March, 1887, "to establish and maintain a library, reading-room, and museum, especially for the collection of books, pictures, and such other articles as may in any way illustrate the war for the suppression of the Rebellion against the United States, 1861–1865." The commanderies of this Order in the several States where it is organized have published several volumes of war papers. The Massachusetts Commandery holds monthly meetings, at which papers are read treating of events or topics connected with the war. The library contains about two thousand volumes and five hundred pamphlets, beside scrap-books, maps, and photographs. See No. 45, Bibliographical Contributions, Library of Harvard University.

The Roxbury Military Historical Society has issued in pamphlet form a Constitution and List of Members. The objects for which the Society shall be maintained are stated in the Constitution to be: *First*, to perpetuate the history of Roxbury and of its military citizens and organizations, past or present; *Second*, to encourage the volunteer militia; *Third*, to advocate measures and principles that will tend to strengthen the patriotism of the community; *Fourth*,

THE CONNECTICUT VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Connecticut Valley Historical Society, Springfield, was incorporated 9 May, 1876, "for the purpose of collecting and preserving such papers, books, records, and memorials as relate to the settlement of the Connecticut Valley." The Society has published one volume, entitled "Papers and Proceedings of the Connecticut Valley Historical Society, 1876-1881," containing seventeen papers and a poem.

THE UNIVERSALIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Universalist Historical Society was incorporated 1 January, 1877. It has its headquarters at Tufts College, where its library is deposited. "Its purposes are to collect and preserve books, periodicals, pamphlets, and whatever relates to the history of the doctrine of universal salvation, and also whatever on the other

to foster social and fraternal intercourse between its members. The date of organization is not given in this pamphlet. The Constitution provides for an annual dinner, of which the Society has had two.

The Society of the Sons of the Revolution in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was incorporated 9 October, 1891, for the purpose "of perpetuating the memory of the men who achieved American Independence, and furthering the proper celebration of the anniversaries of the birthday of Washington, and of prominent events connected with the War of the Revolution, collecting and securing for preservation the rolls and other documents relating to that period, inspiring the members of the Society with the patriotic spirit of their forefathers, and promoting the feeling of friendship among them." The Society has issued a Register of Members (1893) which is full of interesting historical matter. It seeks to preserve a knowledge of historical sites by the erection of suitable tablets.

An organization to be known as the Naval Legion of the United States was recently instituted by naval officers and veterans, at the First Triennial Congress of the General Commandery of the Naval Legion, held in Faneuil Hall. "The purpose of the Association shall be to perpetuate the names, memories, and victories of naval veterans, to encourage research in the realm of naval art and science, and to establish a library, in which to preserve documents, rolls, books, portraits, and relics pertaining to naval heroes." The eligible list for membership includes those in actual service in the navy and marine corps and other branches of that service, and honorably retired members. A new Constitution was adopted, and officers chosen to serve until the fifth of October, which date is identical with the anniversary of the commission of the first ship in the United States Navy.

side belongs to the controversy on that subject." It has not issued any publications. Its library contains about four thousand volumes and two thousand pamphlets.¹

THE BERKSHIRE HISTORICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

The Berkshire Historical and Scientific Society was organized in 1877. The objects of the Society are said to be, "the collection and preservation of facts, documents, and traditions, relating to the history of the County of Berkshire, and of the towns therein, and the acts and lives of its citizens; the collection of portraits, pictures, books, relics, charts, maps, antiquities, and curiosities, in connection therewith; the discussion of all matters pertaining to the same, and the publication of papers and documents relating thereto." The stated meetings of the Society are an Annual Meeting and three Quarterly Meetings which are held in the building of the Berkshire Athenæum. Field meetings may be held at any time. The Society has published four papers to which it gives the title, "Book of Berkshire by its Historical and Scientific Society." I. (1886) *Berkshire Geology*, by Prof. James D. Dana of Yale College; *The Western Boundary of Massachusetts, a Study of Indian and Colonial History*, by Franklin Leonard Pope, *Judicial History of Berkshire*, by Henry W. Taft; *The Early Roads and Settlements of Berkshire West of Stockbridge and Sheffield*, by H. F. Keith. II. (1889) *The Early Botany of Berkshire*, by Rev. A. B. Whipple of Pittsfield; Prof. Albert Hopkins, by President John Bascom; *Sketches of the Early Ministers of Windsor*, by Prof. John L. T. Phillips; *Early Settlements in Cheshire*, by Hon. J. M. Barker. III. (1890) *Medicine in Berkshire*, by Dr. A. M. Smith, Williamstown; *The Protestant Episcopal Church in Berkshire*, by Rev. Joseph Hooper, Lebanon Springs, N. Y.; *A Sketch of the Samuel Phillips*

¹ See No. 45 *Bibliographical Contributions*, Library of Harvard University.

The Buchanan Anthropological Society was incorporated 27 January, 1890. Its purposes are "to spread the Science of Systematic Anthropology as discovered by Prof. Joseph Rodes Buchanan in 1841, and as promulgated by him since that time, by the publication and circulation of such books as may be prepared by Dr. Buchanan in explanation of his philosophy and its bearing on the life of man." The title of this organization suggests the probability of an historical society. Its alleged purposes limit its work to the publication of Dr. Buchanan's books.

Family, by Levi Beebe of Great Barrington; The Indian Mission in Stockbridge, by E. W. B. Canning. IV. (1891) Berkshire at Bennington, by Arthur Latham Perry of Williams College; Recollections of Elder Leland, by Mrs. F. J. Petitcher; The History, Methods, and Purposes of the Berkshire Athenæum, by Harlan H. Ballard; Air Currents, by Levi Beebe; Col. John Brown, by E. W. B. Canning. Members of the Society pay an initiation fee of one dollar; but there are no dues or assessments.¹

THE RUMFORD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

The Rumford Historical Association, Woburn, was incorporated 28 April, 1877; its purposes are, "to take and hold a certain lot of land with the buildings thereon situated at Woburn, Mass., and being known as the birth-place of Benjamin Thompson, or better known as Count Rumford, as a place of historical interest, and for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a museum, library, and reading-room, and advancing the useful arts and sciences by lectures or otherwise." Publications: 1881, Constitution, list of officers, and members. A new manual was printed in 1892, in which a sketch of the history of the Association is brought down to the spring of 1892, and shows that the library and collections are constantly increasing.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF OLD NEWBURY.

The Historical Society of Old Newbury was originally organized in 1877, under the title "The Antiquarian and Historical Society of Old Newbury." The present name was adopted in 1882. The Society has a home in the Public Library of Newburyport, in what was formerly the Tracy Mansion, where Lafayette was received. It has a valuable collection of books, portraits, etc., which is constantly increasing. The only publication by the

¹ In a list of Historical Societies in the Magazine of American History, July, 1889, p. 115, the following title is given, "The Berkshire County Historical and Scientific Society;" again, "The Berkshire County Historical Society" is given in a list, October, 1884, p. 380, and August, 1885, p. 217. The latter title is also included in the list of Historical Societies of the United States published by the American Historical Association. Mr. H. H. Ballard, Secretary of the Society described in the text, writes me that he knows of no other similar society in the County.

Society is an account of the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of Newbury, 10 June, 1885. The Society is not incorporated. It holds annual meetings at which papers are read. Some of these have been published in the Newburyport "Herald."¹

THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF AMERICA.

The Archæological Institute of America was organized in 1879. The Regulations adopted 17 May, 1879, state that it was formed for the purpose of promoting and directing archæological investigations and researches, by the sending out of expeditions for special investigations, by aiding the efforts of independent explorers, by publication of reports of the results of the expeditions which the Institute may undertake or promote, and by any other means which may from time to time appear desirable. Prominent features of the work have been classical archæology and the support of the School at Athens. It has, however, simultaneously prosecuted explorations in this country; and American Archæology is represented in the publications by five volumes written by the distinguished archæological student, A. F. Bandelier. Our associate, Prof. William W. Goodwin, is now (1893) President of the Institute.

THE WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Weymouth Historical Society was organized in 1879, and was incorporated 19 July, 1886, "to make antiquarian collections; to collect, preserve, and disseminate the local history of Weymouth and the genealogy of Weymouth families." The publications of the Society have been: 1881, *Original Journal of Gen. Solomon Lovell during the Penobscot Expedition, with a Sketch of his Life*, by G. Nash; 1885, *Historical Sketch of the Town of Weymouth, Massachusetts, from 1622 to 1684*, by Gilbert Nash, being 1 and 2 of *Weymouth Historical Publications, with Proceedings*. The Society has a small collection of books and pamphlets. Its By-Laws provide for monthly meetings, which are held in the Tufts Library Building.

¹ The Antiquarian and Historical Society, Newburyport, is the title of a Society improperly included in the list of Historical Societies of the United States issued by the American Historical Association. The attempt was probably made to define by its original title the Society described in the text.

THE NEW-ENGLAND METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The New-England Methodist Historical Society was founded 3 May, 1880, and incorporated 13 April, 1882. The purposes of the Society are "to found and perpetuate a library of books, pamphlets, and manuscripts, and a collection of portraits and relics of the past; to maintain a reading-room; to preserve whatever shall illustrate the history and promote the interest of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The Society has a library of over four thousand volumes and sixteen thousand pamphlets at its rooms, 36 Bromfield Street, Boston, of which the statement is made that it is the largest collection of Methodist historical material in this country. The Historiographer prepares and deposits with the Society biographical sketches of deceased members. The Proceedings at the Annual Meetings are published yearly; and these publications contain lists of the works in the library on Methodist church history.¹

THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY.

The Bostonian Society was incorporated 2 December, 1881, "to promote the study of the history of Boston and the preservation

¹ See No. 45, Bibliographical Contributions, Library of Harvard University.

Three numbers of Transactions were issued (1859-61) by a Society called the New England Methodist Historical Society: No. 1. Introduction of Methodism into Boston, 1859; No. 2. History of North Russell Street Methodist Episcopal Church, 1861; No. 3. Half-Century of the Methodist Church, 1861. It appears from the first Annual Report of the present Society, issued 17 January, 1881, that "a Methodist Historical Society was instituted in Boston in 1859, which existed a few years. During the exciting scenes of the late Rebellion it fell into decay. . . . Nine years ago the coming spring (1872) the Historical Society of the New England Conference was organized. Annual sessions were held during the Conference week, of much interest and profit to the cause. Monthly meetings were also held for some years. At the last session of the Conference it was discontinued to make room for this organization, designed to unite the Methodists of the New England States for this common purpose." The purposes of the new organization were set forth in detail by Dr. Dorchester, and are to be found in this Report.

The New England Methodist Historical Society, Malden, is included in the list of Historical Societies of the United States published by the American Historical Association. There is at present but one Society in Massachusetts of the above title, and its office is at 36 Bromfield Street, Boston.

of its antiquities." A society known as the Boston Antiquarian Club was the outcome of a circular issued by William H. Whitmore, 24 May, 1879. The first meeting of this club was held 13 June, 1879. Papers were read before it, some of which were separately published.¹ A committee was appointed to procure the incorporation of the organization, 8 November, 1881; and the name selected was The Bostonian Society. The rooms of the Society were at No. 16 Pemberton Square, until the second floor of the Old State House was allotted to it. The Society established itself in these appropriate quarters, 1 July, 1882. The vast collection of interesting memorials which has been accumulated during the existence of the Society bears witness to the public approval of its purpose. The number of members was originally limited to one thousand, but the limit has apparently been abandoned. The Proceedings of the Annual Meetings have been published, 1883-92, in attractive form. The Proceedings at a meeting held 24 July, 1887, in memory of General Samuel Miller Quincy, and of a monthly meeting held 12 January, 1888, have also been printed.²

THE CAPE COD HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Cape Cod Historical Society was organized 5 August, 1882, and incorporated 9 June, 1883, "for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and publishing historical matter relating to the County of Barnstable and vicinity, and for the maintenance of a cabinet and library." The headquarters of the Society are at Yarmouth. At its Annual Meetings original papers are read and discussions of historical subjects are conducted. When practicable, a summer meeting is held, or an excursion provided to some spot of historical interest. The papers read before the Society have never been

¹ The following papers read at meetings have been published: 1880, Reply to Francis Brinley on the claims of John P. Bigelow as Founder of the Boston Public Library, read 11 May, 1880, by Timothy Bigelow; 1885, William Cooper, Town Clerk of Boston, read 12 April, 1881, by Frederick Tuckerman.

² The Huguenot Memorial Society of Oxford was incorporated 4 October, 1881, "to perpetuate by all appropriate means the memory of the early Huguenot settlement of Oxford." The chief aim of this Society was the purchase of the old fort and the erection of a monument on that site. The object having been accomplished, the Society is no longer active, although the organization is maintained.

collected in a volume, but they have been published in newspapers, and have in some cases been used by their authors in other publications.¹

THE WINCHESTER HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY.

The Winchester Historical and Genealogical Society was organized 20 November, 1884, by the adoption of a Prospectus, Constitution, and By-Laws. The Prospectus sets forth that "the subscribers, appreciating the objects and methods of the Associations now so numerous and efficient, formed to preserve, in permanent forms, the historical and genealogical facts pertaining to the towns in which they exist, propose to organize themselves into such an organization in Winchester." The objects of the Society as stated in the Constitution are "to collect, preserve, and supply to inquirers the facts of the local history of Winchester, and such family genealogies as may be offered to its archives; and to prepare or cause to be prepared, from time to time, such papers relating to these subjects as may be of interest to our citizens." The collection of material made by the Society relating to the town will become a part of the Town Library. The Society has issued a series of papers called "The Winchester Record," consisting of Proceedings and papers read at meetings of the Society. Vol. I., covering the year 1885, contained four numbers; Vol. II., covering 1886, three numbers; while of Vol. III., No. 1 only is printed. The Society maintains its organization, but the members are conscious that the field of labor must be enlarged if the activity which followed the organization is to be maintained in the future.

¹ The Webster Historical Society was incorporated 7 March, 1884. Its purposes were to collect and publish original and other interesting matter illustrating the high character and services of Daniel Webster and other distinguished statesmen; to keep before the public, through libraries, publications, meetings, or otherwise, such matter as may serve as proper texts for political reform and improvement; to educate young men in the importance of a patriotic service to the true interests of their country; to purchase and mark with suitable monuments places of interest associated with Mr. Webster's life. The Proceedings at Marshfield, 12 October, 1882, were published by the Society in 1883. The books, pictures, and collections of the Society were sold at auction a few years since, and the proceeds applied to pay debts.

THE REHOBOTH ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

The Rehoboth Antiquarian Society was incorporated 1 April, 1885, "for the purpose of collecting, receiving, and preserving ancient manuscripts, books, natural and artificial curiosities, and for the erection and maintenance of a building in the town of Rehoboth to be called the Goff Memorial Building, to be used as a public library, school room, and for the preservation of the collections made under the authority herein granted." The Rehoboth Public Library is supported mainly by the Antiquarian Society, and is managed by a Committee under direction of the Society.¹

THE LEXINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Lexington Historical Society was organized 16 March, 1886. Prior to that date a circular was issued to the following effect: "It is proposed to form a society in Lexington for historical research and study in matters connected with the history of the town, and of families and individuals who have been identified with it, also for suitably commemorating from year to year by appropriate services the great event which has rendered the town forever memorable in the annals of our country, the object being to perpetuate a knowledge of our local history, and to awaken and sustain new interest in the honor and good name of Lexington." The Society was incorporated 29 July, 1886, for the purpose of "the study of the history of Lexington and of individuals and families identified with it, the preservation of such knowledge and of such relics as illustrate its history, and the commemoration, by fitting public services, of the event which has rendered the town forever memorable in the annals of the country." One volume of proceedings and papers was issued in 1890. It is entitled *Proceedings of Lexington Historical Society, and Papers relating to the Town, read by some of the Members*. Eighty-two pages are devoted to the Proceedings, and one hundred and forty-one pages to fourteen papers and an appendix. A collection of historical material belonging to the Society is deposited in the Cary Library.²

¹ The Historical Society, Rehoboth, is the title of a Society included in the list published by the American Historical Association. I cannot find that there ever was a society bearing this title.

² See No. 45, Bibliographical Contributions, Library of Harvard University.

THE MANCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Manchester Historical Society is not incorporated. It was formed to gather whatever might contribute towards giving a full and accurate history of the town. The organization was effected 7 June, 1886. The papers and collections of the Society are kept in the library room of the Public Library of Manchester, where the meetings of the Society are usually held. The meetings are quarterly, and papers read at them are usually published in the Manchester "Cricket." The publication by the town of the Town Records is due to the influence of this Society.

THE CONCORD ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

The Concord Antiquarian Society was incorporated 15 December, 1886, "to collect and preserve objects of antiquarian and historical interest, and to stimulate research into local history and antiquities, especially of the towns included within the old limits of Concord." It has about a hundred members, men and women, residents of old Concord, which includes Bedford, Acton, Lincoln, and Carlisle. Regular meetings at which historical papers are read are held monthly. The Annual Meeting is held 12 September, the anniversary of the settlement of the town. The Society has a home and a collection of antiquities and relics. Publications, 1886, By-Laws.¹

THE MALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Malden Historical Society was incorporated 7 February, 1887, "to collect, preserve, and disseminate the local and general history of Malden, and the genealogy of Malden families; to make antiquarian collections; to collect books of general history, genealogy, and biography; and to prepare or cause to be prepared from time to time such papers and records relating to these subjects as may be of general interest to our citizens."

¹ The Concord Lyceum was incorporated 9 February, 1881, for "the general diffusion of knowledge in historical, literary, and scientific subjects," and other objects. The Publications of the Lyceum are: Address pronounced on the Anniversary of the Concord Lyceum, 4 November, 1829; and Semi-centennial, — Proceedings on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Organization of the Lyceum, 7 January, 1879, Introductory Address by E. R. Hoar, Address by E. H. Walcott. Its work has apparently been rather in the field of lectures than historical papers.

THE HYDE PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

In 1887, the residents of Hyde Park interested in historical matters were summoned to a meeting for the purpose of organizing an historical society. The following statement of the object of this meeting is taken from the circular letter which was issued at that time: "There is a large amount of information concerning the early days of our town in possession and knowledge of the older residents, which must soon be lost or forgotten to a great extent, unless some organized effort is made to collate and preserve it." Pursuant to this call, a meeting was held 1 March, at which the Hyde Park Historical Society was organized and a Constitution adopted, in which the object of the Society was defined as follows: "The object of this Society shall be the promotion of the study of history, with particular reference to that of Hyde Park, the preservation and perpetuation of the memory of persons and events connected with said town, and the collection of objects of historic interest." The Society was incorporated 14 April, 1890, for "the prosecution of historical, antiquarian, and literary purposes, and the acquisition, ownership, and control of such real estate and personal property as may be desirable or necessary for the prosecution of the purposes of said Corporation." It has made a collection of local papers and publications relating to the town. It issues the Hyde Park "Record," a quarterly of which eight numbers have appeared. The Society has no permanent home; but it is full of life, and is doing good work.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WATERTOWN.

The Historical Society of Watertown was established in 1888, and incorporated 25 June, 1891, "for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and publishing historical matter relating to the towns and families occupying the original township of Watertown, and in connection therewith to found and maintain a Society building with a museum, art gallery, and library." It holds meetings bi-monthly, and has a few books and pamphlets, the nucleus for a library. Some of the papers read before the Society have been published in the Magazine of American History and some in the Watertown "Enterprise." A committee of the Society will soon publish Vol. I. of the Town Records.

THE FRAMINGHAM HISTORICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

The Framingham Historical and Natural History Society was organized 31 March, 1888, and was incorporated 13 July, 1892, for the purpose of "collecting and preserving articles relating to and illustrating the history of Framingham and vicinity, natural and scientific curiosities, specimens of natural history, recording and preserving natural events that may become of interest in the future, and erecting a building as a safe repository of the same." The Society has quite a collection of books, pamphlets, and relics, but has not as yet published any proceedings or collections. It has, however, published a list of members.

THE WESTBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Westborough Historical Society was incorporated 28 February, 1889, for "the investigation of matters of local history, the collection of objects of historical and scientific interest, and the maintenance of a library." The Society has started upon its work and has the nucleus of a library and collection. It has issued its By-Laws in the form of a folder.

THE SHEPARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Shepard Historical Society was organized in 1889. The purposes of the Society, as set forth in the Constitution, are "to collect and preserve books, manuscripts, and other memorials relating to the First Church in Cambridge, its former pastors and members, and to the parish and town in which the church is situated, and also to promote an interest in local ecclesiastical history, and to pursue other appropriate researches." Rev. Dr. Alexander McKenzie informs me that the membership is composed exclusively of members of the old First Church. In view of the conflicting claims between church and parish, which apparently have not yet ceased, it is proper to add that the Church Society within which this Historical Society is organized is more commonly known as the Shepard Congregational Society. The Historical Society has in its Collections some old records, a manuscript autobiography of Shepard, and other manuscripts and books. It has held meetings from time to time. A paper read before the Society by Professor Albert Bushnell Hart was

published in the Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Second Series, Vol. V. It treated of the relations of Harvard College to the First Church of Cambridge.

THE DORCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Dorchester Historical Society was incorporated 6 April, 1891, "for the purpose of collecting and publishing information in regard to the history of that portion of the city of Boston which formerly constituted the town of Dorchester."

THE BEVERLY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Beverly Historical Society was incorporated 19 May, 1891, "for the purpose of investigating, recording, and perpetuating the history of the town of Beverly, and collecting, holding, and preserving documents, books, memoirs, relics, and all other matter illustrating its history and that of individuals or families identified with it." The Society occupies the Burley Mansion, which was bequeathed to it by Edward Burley. Quarterly meetings are provided for in its By-Laws. It has a nucleus for a library, and has some material for local history on hand. Its publications are as yet limited to its By-Laws, but it has in its possession several papers which have been read before the Society.

THE MEDFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Medfield Historical Society was incorporated 14 September, 1891, for the prosecution of historical and antiquarian work and research; the collection and preservation of books, manuscripts, pamphlets, and other articles of historical and antiquarian interest; the publication of periodicals, tracts, and pamphlets devoted to or treating of historical, antiquarian, or kindred subjects; and other historical and antiquarian objects and purposes." Its publications are Charter, By-Laws, and List of Officers, 1891. Provision is made for stated monthly meetings.¹

¹ The Ipswich Historical Society is included in the list of Historical Societies of the United States published by the American Historical Association. Mr. T. Frank Waters, the President of this organization, thinks the name "historical society" rather presumptuous to apply to the little circle of lovers of antiquarian research who have been in the habit of holding meetings since 1891, at which papers have been read covering points of local history, but who have neither

THE FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Fitchburg Historical Society was organized 3 February, 1892. The objects of the Society, as expressed in the Constitution, are to collect, preserve, and transmit the materials for local history and genealogy, particularly such as pertain to Fitchburg and the northern towns of Worcester County, and to encourage among its members a love for historical research. The present number of members is fifty. Monthly meetings are held. No publications have as yet been issued. The Society has a nucleus for a library, consisting of some two hundred bound volumes and about a thousand pamphlets, maps, manuscripts, etc., largely of a local character. A good degree of interest is manifested, and the Society apparently has a prosperous future before it.

THE CAPE ANN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Cape Ann Historical Society was incorporated 9 February, 1892, "for the purpose of investigating, recording, and perpetuating the history of Cape Ann, and collecting, holding, and preserving documents, books, memoirs, relics, and all other matters illustrating its history and that of individuals or families identified with it." The headquarters of the Society are in Gloucester. Its regular meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month. The Society is young, and has not as yet made a record; but it has among its members some who are intent upon keeping alive the interest in historical matters which led to its foundation.

THE DANVERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Danvers Historical Society was organized in 1892, and incorporated 5 January, 1893, for "the purpose of collecting and preserving such publications, manuscripts, pictures, memorials, and specimens as may illustrate local and general history, but particularly the annals and natural history of the town of Danvers; establishing within the town a library and museum, in which such treasures as it may thus receive or procure shall be deposited and

Charter nor Constitution, library nor house. Monthly meetings have practically been held this winter (1892-93). It would be strange if the enthusiasm which has maintained this interest in the objects of the Society should not ripen into a permanent organization.

kept, and generally fostering among its members and others, by meetings and lectures, and in various ways, a love of historical, literary, and scientific pursuits." Under the auspices of this Society, the Bi-centennial Anniversary of the delusion known as Salem Witchcraft—which began in "Salem Village," now Danvers—was observed, in 1892. The learned and exhaustive address on that occasion was delivered by our associate, Mr. Goodell.

THE OLD SOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Old South Historical Society was organized in 1892. The object of the Society as stated in the Constitution is the study of American History and the promotion of good citizenship. Quarterly meetings are provided for. The June, September, and December meetings are for the reading and discussion of papers. The affairs of the Society are managed by a Senate consisting of the Old South Prize Essayists and the officers of the Society, acting in concert with the Directors of the Old South Studies in History. For the past twelve years prizes for essays on subjects in American history have been offered by the Directors of the Old South Studies in History. The competition has been open each year to all who have graduated from the Boston High Schools during the current and the preceding year. Each year there has been a course of lectures on historical subjects, known as the Old South Lectures for Young People, and the subjects for the essays are chosen with reference to the general subject treated in the lectures for that year. Historical tracts have been published each year in connection with each lecture. These tracts are known as Old South Leaflets. The expense of all this has been borne by Mrs. Mary Hemmenway; and it forms a part, and only a part, of what is known as Old South Work. All of it is volunteer work, entirely independent of the Old South Association. One outcome of this work is the Historical Association, the members of which are at present necessarily youthful.¹

¹ The Old South Museum Association was incorporated 21 February, 1877, "to form a collection of historic memorials and in other ways to encourage a public interest in American History." This Association never proceeded beyond incorporation.

The Old South Association in Boston was incorporated 11 May, 1877, "for the purpose of acquiring and holding the Old South Meeting House in Boston

THE COLONIAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, incorporated 29 December, 1892, as The Massachusetts Society, proposes to hold monthly meetings, and will publish its Proceedings.¹

The foregoing comprise all that come within the strict interpretation of my definition of an historical society; but it will be seen that the list does not include several well-known societies which are ordinarily classed as historical societies. In order to bring within easy reach such information on the subject as I have at command, I group these latter societies by themselves, arranged chronologically by the dates of their organization, adding the titles of such other organizations of similar standing as I have been able to obtain.

and the land under the same upon the corner of Milk Street and Washington Street in said city, for public, historical, memorial, educational, charitable, and religious uses." The main purpose of this incorporation seems to be to hold the property.

¹ The following named Societies have been organized or chartered since this paper was read:

The Bedford Historical Society was organized 29 March, 1893, for the purpose of collecting and preserving objects and facts of local historical interest. Monthly meetings are provided for, at which papers are expected to be read. A valuable collection of historical material and relics, which has already grown up in connection with the Free Public Library, has fostered an interest in historical matters, and has led to the organization of the Society under the inspiration of Mr. Abram English Brown, the historian of Bedford.

The Wakefield Historical Society was incorporated 5 May, 1893. Its purposes are "the collection and preservation of all historical, genealogical, and antiquarian facts, records, and mementoes concerning the town of Wakefield and vicinity, and relating to the natural history of the region, with lectures, discussions, reports, and essays on the topics within the scope of the purposes set forth."

The Massachusetts Society of Colonial Dames of America was incorporated 13 April, 1893. Its headquarters are in Boston. The purposes of the Society are "the collection of historical and genealogical information relating to the Colonial period of Massachusetts and the encouragement of interest in American history."

The Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was incorporated 29 April, 1893. Its headquarters are in Boston. Its purposes are "patriotic, antiquarian, and historical."

THE PILGRIM SOCIETY.

Certain associates were incorporated under this title 24 January, 1820, "for the purpose of procuring, in the town of Plymouth, a suitable lot or plat of ground for the erection of a monument to perpetuate the memories of the virtue, the enterprise, and unparalleled sufferings of their ancestors, who first settled in that ancient town; and for the erection of a suitable building for the accommodation of the meetings of said associates." In 1883, additional powers to acquire property were conferred upon the Society, and its purposes were enlarged by adding "for the creation and preservation of memorials of the Pilgrim Fathers." Publications: 1850, Report on the Expediency of Celebrating the Landing of the Pilgrims on the Twenty-second of that Month; 1871, Proceedings at the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims; 1883, Speech at the Pilgrim Celebration, 1 August, 1883; 1889, The Proceedings at the Celebration of the Pilgrim Society at Plymouth, 1 August, 1889, on the completion of the national monument to the Pilgrims. The Society has a hall at Plymouth filled with memorials. It has a valuable library and has secured the title to many sites of interest in Plymouth.¹

¹ Pilgrim Fathers Hall Association. A number of associates were by special act authorized in 1889 to incorporate under the general laws of the Commonwealth with the above corporate title. No certificate has been issued by the Secretary of the Commonwealth bearing this title. The name suggests a memorial association, but it probably is fraternal in its character. The curious character of the Act of Incorporation conveys the idea of an attempt at a joke.

The Plymouth Society, Plymouth, is the title of an Historical Society given in the Magazine of American History, July, 1890, p. 424. This title was also given in the list published by the American Historical Association in 1891, but does not appear in the 1892 list.

The Cape Cod Pilgrim Memorial Association, of Provincetown, was incorporated 29 February, 1892, for "the purpose of erecting at Provincetown a monument or other suitable memorial or memorials to commemorate the arrival of the 'Mayflower' and the landing of the Pilgrims at Provincetown on the twenty-first day of November, in the year sixteen hundred and twenty, and to perpetuate, by enduring memorials, the memory of the signing of the Compact, the birth of Peregrine White, the death of Dorothy May Bradford, and the other interesting historical incidents connected with the 'Mayflower' while at anchor in Cape Cod harbor, and for the purpose of acquiring and holding land upon which to erect such memorials, and of constructing a building or buildings to accommodate the meetings and to contain the cabinets, collections, and libraries of said Society."

THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT ASSOCIATION.

The Bunker Hill Monument Association was incorporated 7 June, 1823, for the construction of a monument in Charlestown, to perpetuate the memory of the early events of the American Revolution. 28 March, 1865, this Association was authorized to rebuild the Beacon Monument, which was built in the year 1790 by the citizens of Boston to commemorate that train of events which led to the American Revolution and finally secured liberty and independence to the United States. A History of the Association was published in 1877. The volume is sumptuous in appearance, with broad margins to the pages and expensive illustrations. The Proceedings at the Annual Meeting on the seventeenth of June have been published continuously since 1861.¹

THE AMERICAN CONGREGATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

On the twelfth of April, 1854, the Congregational Library Association of Boston was incorporated "for the purpose of establishing and perpetuating a library of the religious history of New England, and for the erection of a suitable building for the accommodation of the same, and for the use of charitable societies." 10 May, 1864, the Congregational Library Association was authorized to change its name, and to take the name, The American Congregational Association, with increased powers for denominational work. The foregoing dates are taken from the Acts of the Legislature. It appears from an Historical Sketch of the American Congregational Association, by I. P. Langworthy, published in 1873, that the organization of the Library Association was effected in 1851, and that it was re-organized in 1853. The Report of the Directors for 1892 is termed the Thirty-ninth Annual Report. The object of the American Congregational Association is stated in its Constitution to be to found and perpetuate a library of books, pamphlets, and manuscripts, and a collection of portraits,

¹ The Wadsworth Monument Association was incorporated 1825. The Dustin Monument Association was incorporated 1856. The Standish Monument Association was incorporated 1872. A number of persons were made a corporation in 1874 to erect a monument to General Joseph Warren. All of these Associations partake somewhat of the character of the Bunker Hill Monument Association.

and whatever else shall seem to illustrate Puritan history, and promote the general interests of Congregationalism. In 1889 it had a library of thirty-five thousand volumes, fifty-two thousand pamphlets, thirty-one thousand unbound serials.¹ The Association does not profess to publish other accounts of its proceedings than are contained in its Annual Reports. It was, however, for a time part owner of the "Congregational Quarterly."²

THE PRINCE SOCIETY.

The Prince Society, organized in 1858, was incorporated in 1874, "for the purpose of preserving and extending the knowledge of American History by editing and printing such manuscripts, rare tracts, and volumes as are mostly confined in their use to historical students and public libraries." Membership in this Society is obtained by subscribing for the publications. These volumes are not put on the market, but are delivered only to subscribers. The value of the work performed by the Society can best be judged by examining their publications, which up to the present time have been: *New England's Prospect*, by William Wood, preface by Charles Deane; *The Hutchinson Papers*, reprinted from the edition of 1769, edited by William H. Whitmore; *John Dunton's Letters from New England*, edited by William H. Whitmore; the *Andros Tracts*, with a memoir of Sir Edmund Andros, by the editor, William H. Whitmore; *Sir William Alexander and American Colonization*, with a memoir of Sir William Alexander, by the editor, Rev. Edmund F. Slafter; *John Wheelwright*, with a memoir by the editor, Charles H. Bell; *Voyages of the Northmen to America*, edited, with an introduction, by Rev. Edmund F. Slafter; *The Voyages of Samuel de Champlain*, edited with a memoir and historical illustrations by Rev. Dr. Edmund F. Slafter; *New English Canaan, or New Canaan*, by Thomas Morton, edited by Charles Francis Adams, Jr.; *Voyage of Peter Esprit Radisson*, edited by Gideon D. Scull; *Captain John Mason, the founder of New Hampshire*, edited by John Ward Dean; *Sir Ferdinando Gorges and his province of*

¹ See No. 45, *Bibliographical Contributions*, Library of Harvard University.

² "The American Congregational Historical Society, Chelsea," is the title of a Society given in the *Magazine of American History*, July, 1890, p. 424. I have not been able to discover that there ever was such an organization in Chelsea.

Maine, with a memoir, by James P. Baxter. The Society has in preparation: Sir Humphrey Gilbert, with a memoir, by David G. Haskins, Jr.; Samuel Maverick, with a memoir, by Frank W. Haskell; Edward Randolph, with a memoir, by Robert N. Toppan.

THE BOSTON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY.

The Boston Numismatic Society was instituted 3 March, 1860, for the promotion of Numismatic Science and the formation of a cabinet and library for the use of its members. 19 March, 1870, it was incorporated, and the purposes of the Corporation are the "collecting and preserving medals and coins, and publishing accounts of the same; also the collecting of a Numismatic Library, elucidating the history of ancient and modern medals and coins." References to the Proceedings will be found in the Magazine of American History, and in the American Journal of Numismatics and Bulletin of the American Numismatic and Archæological Societies.¹

THE BERKSHIRE ATHENÆUM.

The Berkshire Athenæum was incorporated in 1871, for the purpose of diffusing knowledge by means of a library and of historical and natural curiosities. It has been said of it that it may fairly claim to be the literary, historical, and artistic centre of the county. It has a museum of local antiquities, and one department of its library is devoted to Massachusetts history. The Athenæum is located at Pittsfield.²

THE OAK TREE ASSOCIATION.

The Oak Tree Association, Charlemont, is a neighborhood organization, which holds Annual Meetings, at which the officers

¹ The Boston Memorial Association was incorporated 2 April, 1880. Its purposes are "the ornamentation of the city of Boston, the care of its memorials, the preservation and improvement of its public grounds, and the erection of works of art within the limits of the city." This Association is included in the list of Historical Societies in the United States issued by the American Historical Association. A society called the Boston Memorial Society is also included in the same list. This is obviously an error.

² An interesting description of the historical features of the library is contained in No. 45, Bibliographical Contributions, Library of Harvard University.

The Becket Athenæum was incorporated 8 March, 1888, to establish and maintain, among other things, a library, and an antiquarian and art museum.

are elected. It has existed about twenty years. It derives its name from a large oak near the geographical centre of the town, around which cluster historical reminiscences. The objects of the Association are to collect and preserve items of history of the surrounding neighborhood. The Annual Meetings are both social and literary in character.

There are other Societies which introduce into the definition of their purposes language which might lay the foundation for a claim that they intended to perform historical work. A Canadian Relief Society announces that it is "for the encouragement of literary, historical, dramatic, and musical talents." The suspicion arises that the author of the petition for a charter meant to say "histrionic" instead of "historical." An association whose first purpose appears to be "the maintenance of a place of social meetings" adds to the functions of the corporation the "historical commemoration of the Battle of Bunker Hill." A military club prefaces the social functions described in its charter by stating that its purpose is "to maintain and increase the memories and traditions of the military and naval service of the United States of America." A society organized as Sons of Naval Veterans, and which changed its name, November, 1892, to Naval Legion of the United States, states that its purpose is "to unite the sons of naval veterans in social, literary, educational, historical, monumental, and antiquarian work." The Lynn Natural History Society is organized for the "purpose of collecting and preserving materials for civil" as well as for "natural" history. There have been Historical Societies at Harvard University and at Williams College, neither of which is in active existence to-day.¹

CONCLUSION.

Notwithstanding the wide range covered by the topical and limited societies in the foregoing lists, the special field which this Society was organized to cover is not pre-empted, except so far as

¹ The Chelsea Veteran Firemen's Association was incorporated 4 January, 1893, and one of its purposes is said to be "the preservation of historical matter relating to firemen."

The Anchor Club Association was incorporated 19 May, 1893. It has its headquarters at Lynn. Its purposes are "to encourage and promote an interest in antiquarian and historical subjects."

it has been taken up by those organizations which set no bounds to their work. It is perhaps desirable, in order to obtain a full and rounded view of any period of history, that the impressions should be recorded which it has made upon men of widely different conditions, whose minds have been cultivated under various methods of education, whose capacity for the interpretation of events has been modified by the teachings of religious leaders, whose patriotism may perhaps influence their opinions, and whose jealousies may lead them to give undue prominence to this or that people, or perhaps to this or that leader among men. A knowledge of the opinions of all classes of men, whatever their nationality, whatever their creed, is obviously desirable in order to reach the resultant which may be termed the verdict of the civilized world. Yet I count it most fortunate that the development of our early New England history has been placed in the hands of the men of New England. I do not doubt that an analysis of the membership of the Massachusetts Historical Society and of the American Antiquarian Society would disclose the fact that nearly all the members would have been eligible to this Society. If at times these interpreters of our history have been disposed to deal tenderly with the stern leaders of the theocracy who drove from the little towns those who differed from them in opinion, who ostracized the Church of England men, and exiled the Quakers; if these writers have not criticised the steps taken in the Antinomian Controversy as rigorously as they are criticised to-day,—yet we may congratulate ourselves that we can find no attempt at concealment, misstatement, or wilful misinterpretation of facts. Our historians have never asked that the story of the Salem Witchcraft persecutions should be stricken from our school-books; nor would they have protested against the verdict of posterity upon the acts of the Inquisition, if it had been a New England institution. Their idea of writing history has been to state all the facts. It is only their estimate of the influence of men and their deeds upon the development of our government which is personal, and has been liable to be affected by the atmosphere of current opinions. That these writers have been fair and honest, and have not sought to conceal facts in order to exalt their heroes, will be admitted by all. That we can best rely in the future upon men of the same stock for candor of statement in dealing with events, and for a

sympathetic appreciation of the lives of our forefathers, will not be denied by many. This is our justification for seeking to place a specific line of historic work in the hands of a class.

At the outset we recognize the objection which may be raised, that biographers, as a rule, make heroes of their subjects, and that men who treat of topics are apt to be influenced by their standpoint. A recent examination of the different accounts of the fight at Oriskany, in 1777, impressed me strongly with these facts. The differences between the English and the American accounts we should naturally expect; but in addition to the general accounts on both sides, there were the local accounts and the stories of the Indians on the American side, and the historians of the Hessians on the British. Whichever of these accounts you read, you will conclude that the brunt of the fighting was borne by the troops with which the particular author is dealing. The failing is natural, and to be expected in any author who approaches his subject in any other than a broad, judicial spirit. All men are subject to be influenced by their wishes and their hopes in the discussion of questions of politics, religion, or history; but I believe there is no class of writers who have dealt more frankly with events with which their ancestors were associated than the recent students of our own history, in whose veins is to be found the blood of our New England stock.

In what manner a spirit of fellowship can be developed among our members can best be left to the judgment of the Council. This, however, I feel strongly, that if our meetings are to prove interesting, and if our Society is to make a record for itself, the members who have the time at command for such a purpose must be prepared to submit for our consideration original papers worthy to be printed. Such papers should be communicated to the Society at our Stated Meetings, and, while they should go forth under the author's name, they should be given to the world as the work of the Society in its published Transactions. In the selection of new members due regard should be had for the preservation of a suitable working force; and reliance should always be placed upon the members of the Society for the materials which are to make the proceedings at our meetings of interest. Under no circumstances ought we, in my judgment, to import outside talent in order to attract numbers. It would be far better to have fewer Stated Meetings than not to rely upon ourselves.

In conclusion, let us hope that the members of THE COLONIAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS, in the work which they are about to perform, in depicting the deeds of their ancestors and developing the influence which these worthies have had in building up our government, will never approach the subject in any other frame of mind than that of perfect fairness. This we have a right to expect from them; it is their birthright. If they live up to it, we can prophesy a bright career for the Society.

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